



SITREP 49/13

Drug and alcohol FAQs now online

Not surprisingly, the commencement of the Department's new Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Policy and Procedures on 1 December has resulted in many questions from members. While we encourage all members to closely read both the Policy and Procedures documents, we also recognise that it's (a) pretty detailed (b) potentially confusing. So we've prepared a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) advice based, funnily enough, on the questions that members have been asking.

To download and print a copy of our FAQ advice, follow the link in the online version of this SITREP. Our FAQ advice will also be placed on the Union Guides section of our website in the new year to ensure it remains relevant and allow it to be updated as more information and/or questions come to hand.

O'Farrell cuts public sector wages ... and loses - update #5

We've previously reported on the O'Farrell Government's shameful attempt to change the law to avoid having to pay public sector members, including FBEU members, an additional 0.25% in super (see SITREPs 26, 27, 28, 32 and 33 of 2013). It lost when the ALP Opposition, supported by the Greens, the Fishers & Shooters and Christian Democrats, successfully blocked the Government in the upper house. That was back in August.

So O'Farrell Government attempted to bully the IRC into reversing its original decision on the basis of "public interest". And it lost once again.

This week, the IRC's retiring President Boland handed down his decision confirming the full 2.5% wage increase is payable, regardless of, and in addition to, any increase in compulsory employer superannuation contributions.

But it's not the end of the matter, with NSW Treasurer Baird confirming that even more public funds will now be wasted in another appeal to Justice Boland's judgment. There is clearly no length that the O'Farrell Government will not go to in order to deny public sector workers a half-decent wage rise.

Unions defeat O'Farrell's crook election laws

Back in SITREP 8/2012 (see "*O'Farrell's war on workers - Part 3, election funding*") we reported the passing of legislation by the O'Farrell Government that effectively silenced unions and other community groups from participating in the democratic process. O'Farrell's so-called "democratic reforms" placed severe restrictions on unions like the FBEU to support any candidate or party who actually supported them.

Following an application by Unions NSW, this week the High Court struck down O'Farrell's laws in a unanimous judgment which found they breached the implied freedom of political communication in the Australian Constitution - the closest thing Australia has to the right to free speech. Given the Liberals' penchant for destroying institutions that don't toe their class war line (the IRC being a perfect example), perhaps Tony Abbott will now look to shutting the High Court too?

The Court's decision will allow the FBEU to allocate more resources to campaign against the O'Farrell Government's decisions on TOLing, the 2.5% wage cap and station closures where it will hurt them most - at the March 2015 state election.



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Retained strike teams and Clause 29 - update #5

We welcomed the Commissioner's email to staff last Friday confirming that the Department would abide by the IRC direction to pay \$200 per night for members accommodated at Skoda Stadium, and \$150 per night at Chevalier College. That's another \$50,000 clawed back by the Union for members.

We were much less impressed by the threat implicit in the Commissioner's closing line: "*By necessity Fire & Rescue NSW will now review whether [our emphasis] and how such deployments will take place in the future ...*". So because we dare to claim our Award entitlements instead of being grateful for the scraps they throw us then they might not use us at all in future? Pathetic.

The Union has informed the IRC it has accepted this \$200 / \$150 settlement on a one-off, without prejudice basis. While the Department is expected to make these payments shortly, and without the need for members to submit claims, members should check their pay advice to ensure that this occurs.

Retained Award negotiations - update #9

Further to our last update in SITREP 47, the Union's application for a new Retained Award returned once again to the IRC on Wednesday this week. Justice Walton issued directions for the Union to formally respond to the Department's document of 4 December by 10 January, and has set down 5 February for one last ditch attempt at conciliation before the matter moves to arbitration.

Union Office Xmas/New Year Shutdown

The Union Office will close today and re-open on Monday 6 January. Members requiring assistance over this time may contact a State Committee official:

John Henry, Senior Vice President	77 Station St Marys C	0412 786 097
Matthew Murray, Junior Vice President	17 Station Drummoyne D	0418 650 803
Ken Smith, Central Coast S-B Secretary	228 Station Berkeley Vale C	0419 422 612
Tim Anderson, Country S-B Secretary	216 Station Bathurst C	0429 770 880
Phil Hay, Illawarra S-B Secretary	503 Station Wollongong B	0438 665 802
Luke Russell, Newcastle S-B Secretary	464 Station Toronto C	0404 910 521
Phil Gardner, Retained S-B Secretary	72 Station Merrylands	0414 435 860
Mark Cavanough, Senior Officers' S-B Secretary	MN1 Newcastle A	0413 996 244
Stephen Cresswell, Sydney North S-B Secretary	36 Station Crows Nest A	0417 688 415
Trevor Ross, Sydney Outer West S-B Secretary	78 Station Dunheved B	0413 503 410
Marty Dixon, Sydney Inner West S-B Secretary	47 Station Revesby C	0416 307 633
Leighton Drury, Sydney Central West S-B Sec'y	50 Station Hornsby A	0403 808 536
Wes Smith, Sydney Central S-B Secretary	1 Station City of Sydney A	0413 992 110
Richard Neville, Sydney South West S-B Sec'y	HART E	0417 497 327
Mick Nairn, Sydney South S-B Secretary	54 Station Cronulla A	0423 389 544

On behalf of the officials and staff I wish all members and your families the compliments of the Season.

Jim Casey
State Secretary

Friday 20 December 2013